

Fact Sheet



Curtis Metals Facility

Curtis, Nebraska

May 2002

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 7 is inviting the public to review and comment on a **proposed cleanup remedy and permit modification to address soil contamination** at the Curtis Metals (CM) site, about ¼-mile south of Curtis, NE, along the west side of Highway 18. The proposed remedy is to remove contaminated soil on and around the site, treat it to nonhazardous levels, and then dispose of the treated soil in an off-site permitted solid waste landfill. EPA also proposes to treat the soil in a temporary corrective action management unit and modify the facility's post-closure permit to include remedy requirements.

Site background and risks

The CM Maintenance Facility operated as a battery recycling facility on land leased from Burlington Northern Railroad from the mid-1960s to 1978. Battery breaking during this operating stage resulted in high levels of lead contamination in soils on and around the site. Lower levels of cadmium, arsenic and mercury were also found. Cadmium and mercury were found at levels too low to present a health risk, but lead and arsenic levels are high enough to potentially pose a threat to human health and the environment.

Details of proposed cleanup remedy

For contaminated areas adjacent to the facility, soils would be cleaned up to a level safe enough for residential use [lead concentration: 400 parts per million (ppm)]. Soils within the facility's property boundary would be cleaned up to a level low enough to protect on-site workers and trespassers (lead concentrations: surface soil - 875 ppm; subsurface soil - 1,600 ppm). Arsenic contamination would be cleaned up to naturally-occurring levels, with a calculated cleanup standard of 16 ppm. A temporary Corrective Action Management Unit (CAMU) would be set up at the nearby CM Battery Facility to stockpile and treat the contaminated soil. Treated soils would then be moved off-site and excavated areas would be back-filled with clean soil.

As part of this cleanup, Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway Company (BNSF) also proposes to remove treated soils that were placed in a containment cell at the CM Battery Facility during its closure. Removal of these soils would involve the same methods and standards as those for the CM Maintenance Facility.

Public Involvement Opportunities

Attend a Public Availability Session

When: Thursday, June 20, 2002
Anytime from 4 to 7 p.m.

Where: Legion Hall Post 92
On Main Street
Curtis, Nebraska

Send Comments

When: May 24 to July 23, 2002

To Whom: Jeff Johnson, Ph.D.
Air, RCRA & Toxics Division
U.S. EPA Region 7
901 N. 5th Street
Kansas City, KS 66101

The facility's post-closure permit must be modified to include the requirements associated with cleanup activities before they begin. The proposed permit modifications are available for review at the Klyte Burt Memorial Library (*see details below*). The permittee's compliance history during the life of the permit being modified is available from the Agency contact person, Jeff Johnson, Ph.D., EPA Region 7 (*see details below*).

What other remedies were considered?

Two other alternatives, which were considered but not selected, involved removal and treatment steps similar to the proposed remedy, but differed with respect to soil disposal location, specifically:

- #1: Return treated soils to the CM Maintenance Facility and placement within an on-site solid waste treatment/disposal cell (constructed and operated in accordance with Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality Title 132, Integrated Solid Waste Management Regulations), OR;
- #2: Disposal within a comparable treatment/disposal cell at the nearby CM Battery Facility.

Public involvement opportunities

A complete discussion of all cleanup alternatives can be found in the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Facility Investigation Report and Corrective Measures Report in the site's administrative record. These documents may be viewed at the following locations:

Klyte Burt Memorial Library
316 Center Avenue
Curtis, NE 69025
308-367-4148

Hours: 1:30-5:30 p.m., Mon. & Wed.-Fri.
2:30-5:30 p.m., 7-9 p.m., Tuesday
2-5 p.m., Saturday

Information Resource Center, EPA Region 7
901 N. 5th Street
Kansas City, KS 66101
913-551-7241

Hours: 9 a.m.-3 p.m., Mon.-Fri.

EPA encourages the public to review these documents and comment on all the cleanup remedy alternatives. EPA has set a 60-day public comment period from May 24 to July 23, 2002. A public availability session has also been scheduled to give the public an opportunity to discuss the proposed cleanup plan with EPA officials and representatives of BNSF (*see details in box on front*). A more formal public hearing has not been scheduled, but will be held if there is sufficient public interest.

Requests for a public hearing must be in writing and must state the issues to be raised. EPA will evaluate any request and hold a formal hearing if it finds that a hearing will contribute to the decision-making process by clarifying significant issues affecting the cleanup remedy. EPA will finalize a remedy only after the public comment period ends and all comments are reviewed. EPA may modify the proposed remedy or choose another one, based on new information and comments from the public.

Questions, comments and hearing requests to:

Jeff Johnson, Ph.D.
Air, RCRA, and Toxics Division
U.S. EPA Region 7
901 N. 5th Street
Kansas City, KS 66101
913-551-7849, or toll-free at 800-223-0425

News media and public inquiries to:

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